



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 13, 2017

CONTACT

William Pitman, Governor's Office

william.pitman@state.ma.us

Paul McMorrow, Housing and Economic Development

paul.mcmorrow@state.ma.us



**Baker-Polito Administration Announces \$5 Million Grant for New WPI
Laboratory for Smart, Secure Medical Device Innovation**

PracticePoint at Worcester Polytechnic Institute is an integrated engineering/healthcare research and development center that will accelerate the creation of smart, secure digital health technologies and support workforce development for the industry.

WORCESTER – Today the Baker-Polito Administration announced a \$5 million matching grant from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MassTech) to Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), to support the launch of a new landmark healthcare research and product development initiative called PracticePoint at WPI. The new award from [MassTech's Collaborative Research and Development Matching Grant Program](#) will match contributions from WPI and private sector stakeholders, including GE Healthcare Life Sciences, and fund new integrated research and development labs focused on the commercialization of secure healthcare devices and systems.

Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito announced the grant this morning at a ceremony in Worcester, alongside WPI President Dr. Laurie Leshin and Ann R. Klee, Vice President of Boston Development and Operations at GE.

"PracticePoint at WPI will help ensure Massachusetts continues as a global leader in digital healthcare and the innovation economy," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "Along with our administration's existing investments in advanced materials, smart devices,

data and cyber security, this new public-private research and development partnership will deliver new advancements that create jobs and improve the lives of patients across the globe.”

“This exciting new facility will offer space for researchers to explore new opportunities and technology like never before,” **said Lieutenant Governor Polito.** “By integrating medical labs with manufacturing and testing, PracticePoint at WPI will deliver new innovations and make the Worcester region a leader in delivering the next generation of healthcare advancements and jobs.”

Located at [Gateway Park at WPI](#), the PracticePoint facility will provide simulated healthcare settings and integrate them with advanced research and development infrastructure, enabling companies large and small to test and evolve their technologies. Multidisciplinary academic and industry teams will conduct pre-competitive research at PracticePoint to advance the entire field. The center will also offer a range of educational and training opportunities for workforce development to support the growing digital health industry in Massachusetts, which already boasts over 350 companies.

PracticePoint at WPI will focus on the development of cyber-physical healthcare systems and products. These systems and products could include any device that intelligently interacts with people or things, such as robotic diagnostic tools, image-guided surgical robots, sensor-enabled and personalized therapeutics, smart rehabilitation devices, smart orthoses and prosthetics, or home healthcare proxy devices. These smart and secure devices can help improve surgical procedures, rehabilitative care, and independent living, while ultimately enabling highly personalized precision therapies, procedures, and diagnostics to deliver truly personalized care.

The center will feature four settings -- surgical, clinical, rehabilitative, and home healthcare -- in a single research and development facility. The facility will accelerate digital health product development cycles by providing rapid point-of-practice testing that co-locates healthcare practitioners and technical teams, advanced manufacturing infrastructure, and testing technologies, while integrating secure data analytics and equipment to test technologies for cybersecurity vulnerabilities.

The Commonwealth’s investment in PracticePoint will be matched by nearly \$9.5 million in funds from WPI, as well as \$2.5 million from GE Healthcare Life Sciences in both capital investments and imaging equipment.

“Imagine new ways to treat inoperable tumors, new systems that allow elders to remain at home safely, or smart devices that speed rehabilitative care—these are just

some of the extraordinary technologies we hope will emerge when we bring together creative engineers, scientists and clinicians to work in the novel setting that PracticePoint provides,” **said WPI President Laurie Leshin.** “I want to thank Governor Baker and Lieutenant Governor Polito, and the administration’s economic development team for partnering with WPI and GE to make this new initiative a reality.”

“The contribution of direct, in-kind and equipment totaling \$2.5 million from GE Healthcare Life Sciences strengthens our longstanding connection with WPI, an important business, research and recruiting partner for GE. It also reinforces GE’s commitment to investment and innovation throughout Massachusetts in conjunction with the move of our headquarters to Boston,” **said Ger Brophy, General Manager at GE Healthcare Life Sciences.** “Worcester Polytechnic Institute prepares the next generation of scientists and engineers that we need at GE and GE Healthcare Life Sciences to continue our work of enabling clinicians and researchers to discover, develop and deliver life-changing therapies.”

The Commonwealth’s participation in PracticePoint at WPI advances the Massachusetts Digital Health Initiative, a statewide public-private economic development partnership the Baker-Polito Administration [launched](#) in January 2016. The administration has also [formed](#) a public-private Digital Healthcare Council, to accelerate the discovery and deployment of digital health technologies; [launched](#) a marketplace program, to connect early-stage digital health firms to pilot opportunities; [led](#) an economic development mission to Israel, focused on digital health and cybersecurity technologies; and [supported](#) the opening of a new digital health accelerator in Boston’s Fenway neighborhood, PULSE@MassChallenge.

“We are proud of our ongoing work to develop regional technology clusters, and harness emerging technologies as drivers of regional economic development,” **said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Jay Ash.** “Worcester is already a leader in robotics, healthcare delivery, and the life sciences. PracticePoint at WPI will build on that expertise, and create a vibrant new economic engine in the heart of Massachusetts.”

“By making direct investments into innovation infrastructure, we are expanding the innovation capacity at our universities, and in turn, supporting the growth of industry clusters that are vital to the Commonwealth’s future economic growth,” **said Tim Connelly, Executive Director/CEO of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative.** “WPI has a strong track record of bringing together faculty and students with leading companies to advance research. We are confident that this investment will continue that track record, while boosting the competitiveness of our Massachusetts companies and students as they engage with the global economy.”

This is the sixth award made by the Innovation Institute at the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative under the Commonwealth's [Collaborative Research and Development Matching Grant program](#), which makes high-impact capital grant awards in promising areas of technology innovation. Through the matching grant program, MassTech is also supporting the growth of regional emerging technology clusters in big data and cybersecurity, nanomanufactured smart sensors, printed electronics, marine robotics, and cloud computing.

The Collaborative Research and Development Matching Grant program was established in 2012, with a \$50 million in capital authorization, to spur additional research and development activity in the Commonwealth's regions. The Baker-Polito Administration [secured](#) an additional \$15 million in capital authorization through the 2016 economic development legislation. Proposals funded under the program are reviewed by an Investment Advisory Committee composed of executives from academia, industry, and the venture capital communities.

About MassTech

The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative is an innovative public agency working to enhance economic growth, accelerate technology use and adoption, and harness the value of research by engaging in meaningful collaborations across academia, industry, and government. From improving our health care systems and expanding high-speed internet across the state to fostering emerging industry clusters, MassTech is driving innovation and supporting a vibrant economy across the Commonwealth. www.masstech.org.

About Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Founded in 1865 in Worcester, Mass., WPI is one of the nation's first engineering and technology universities. Its 14 academic departments offer more than 50 undergraduate and graduate degree programs in science, engineering, technology, business, the social sciences, and the humanities and arts, leading to bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. WPI's talented faculty work with students on interdisciplinary research that seeks solutions to important and socially relevant problems in fields as diverse as the life sciences and bioengineering, energy, information security, materials processing, and robotics. Students also have the opportunity to make a difference to communities and organizations around the world through the university's innovative Global Projects Program. There are more than 40 WPI project centers throughout the Americas, Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Europe.

About GE Healthcare

GE Healthcare provides transformational medical technologies and services to meet the demand for increased access, enhanced quality and more affordable healthcare around the world. GE (NYSE: GE) works on things that matter - great people and technologies taking on tough challenges. From medical imaging, software & IT, patient monitoring and diagnostics to drug discovery, biopharmaceutical manufacturing technologies and performance improvement solutions, GE Healthcare helps medical professionals deliver great healthcare to their patients. For more information about GE Healthcare, visit our website at www.gehealthcare.com.

###